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WITHIN DOORS.

THE southing wind doth shake the casement sash;
 And sheets of driving rain pass thwart the eye,
 And blur a flying cloud of sprayey white
 Upon the blackened pool. A straggling dog,
 With dripping comb beneath and drooping tail,
 Trots steadfastly along. Upon the box
 Of city-coach the driver sits, enwrapped
 In shining garb of water-proof, and cracks
 The jaded horses, sleeky-wet, that jerk
 The carriage on with half-reluctant step.
 A row of pigeons 'neath the showering eaves
 Sit cooing on the moulding of the frieze,
 Pecking their reeky plumes, and huddling close
 With sidelong push against each other there.
 Dark swallows dart, and skim the fountain-pond,
 And flash their white breasts on their lightning wing;
 Now tortuously scrape the ground in pairs,
 Scooping the droning fly that swarms the damp,
 Next upward shoot with sudden curve, then dive.
 The wetted flag spreads heavy from the mast;
 The smoke clouds scatter on the chimney-tops;
 The wind turns up the white sides of the leaves.

While thus the storm swept dreary all the day,
 In-doors I sat beside her at the blind,
 And while she wrought the slipper's broidered vine,
 And pet canary cracked his seeds and sang,
 Whetting his beak upon the roost meanwhile,
 I held the booklet of a German bard,
 And tried my skill at rendering of his rhymes.
 'Twas he,* who sang of Venice, ocean's queen,
 Himself an outcast from his fatherland,
 Who sought to revel 'mid her stores of Art,
 And drink the memories of her artist-kings.

I wrote, erased, and changed a word or rhyme,
 And caught, low-toned, a cadence that I liked,
 Then read each one aloud for her award—
 The first awoke in dreams historic days—

I.

This labyrinth of bridges and by-ways,
 That manifold in vexing angles turn!
 How shall a stranger all their windings learn,
 How thread unaided all this wondrous maze?
 But from St. Mark's high-balconed towers I gaze
 And pierce the distance with unwavering eye,
 And from the wonders that around me lie,
 A picture, as in dream-life, forms and plays.
 I greet the ocean yonder all so clear,
 And there the Alps that in a far-off sweep
 Look down upon the islets of the deep;
 And lo! there comes a daring race and free,
 On oaken piles thus midway in the sea,
 To build their palaces and temples here!

II.

Oh, long and endless are the wails that swell
 Upon these listless breezes, as they go,

* Graf von Platen.

The very halls out-pour them loud or low,
 That once were jubilant with gayest spell.
 Venetia, that had dared the Aonian, fell!
 The wheel of Fortune bringeth nothing back;
 A paltry fleet her haven-channels track
 Along the Slavonian banks they loved so well.
 Erewhile, Venetia, thou was decked to be
 Like some proud bride in golden garb arrayed,
 As thy Paul Veronese hath painted thee!
 But now amazed upon the balustrade
 Of these rich giant-steps the poet stays,
 Unable to do more, the toll of tears he pays.

III.

When on my soul doth deep dejection weigh,
 'Twill lighten 'mid the live Rialto's joy;
 But I will ne'er amuse me with a toy,
 Yet seek the quiet of the vanquished day,
 To mark the bridge's dense reflections play
 On lonely waves that lowly lap the shore,
 Where a wild laurel swings its branches o'er
 Palatial walls half fallen in decay.
 And when thus standing on her marble piers,
 I've lost my vision in the gloomy sea,
 That ne'er again a Doge shall make his bride,
 I rouse me from my slumbrous reverie,
 When echoing from canals on every side,
 I hear at times the cry of gondoliers.

LINES ON A PICTURE.

Lowly bent, with reverent look,
 O'er the cross-illuminated book,
 Meekly wearing all the while,
 Something sweeter than a smile,
 Something sadder than a tear,
 On her fair face, "lily-clear"—
 See a maiden, modest, mild,
 Readeth of an Infant-Child;
 Well we know what ancient story
 In her eyes reflects its glory—
 Well we know such lustrous look,
 Lighted only by *one* Book!
 Trust, and tenderness, and truth
 Glow through all her grace of youth,
 While an air of holy calm
 Breathes about her like a balm—
 Fragrant as the flowery sphere
 Of some unseen angel near;
 And from angel's heart of flame
 Surely inspiration came
 To the Painter, when his art
 Bade thee into Beauty start,
 Vision fair of maiden mild,
 Reading of the Saviour Child!

It is a poor compliment to pay to a painter to tell him that his figure stands out of the canvas, or that you start at the likeness of the portrait. Take almost any daub, cut it out of the canvas, and place the figure looking into or out of a window, and any one may take it for life.—S. T. Coleridge.